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CRITICAL
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CONCERNING

The *Scottish* Historians,

HUME, STUART, AND ROBERTSON.

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**CRITICAL
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The Scottish Historians

HUME, STUART, AND ROBERTSON:

INCLUDING

**An Idea of the Reign of MARY Queen of Scots, as a
Portion of History;**

**Specimens of the Histories of this Princess,
by Dr. STUART and Dr. ROBERTSON;**

AND

A comparative View of the Merits of these Rival Historians;

WITH

A LITERARY PICTURE of Dr. ROBERTSON,

In a contrasted Opposition with the celebrated Mr. HUME.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. EVANS, Paternoster-Row.

MDCCLXXXII.

CRITICAL
OBSERVATIONS

CONCERNING

THE GREEK HISTORIANS

HENRY STUART AND ROBERTSON

TRANSLATED

FROM THE GREEK OF THE EDITION OF M. J. L. DE BOSSCHET, AS A
FACSIMILE OF THE ORIGINAL

AND WITH A HISTORY OF THE TOWN
OF BRISTOL, AND THE ROMAN HISTORY



A COPY OF THE ORIGINAL

WITH

A LITERARY HISTORY OF DR. ROBERTSON

IN A SERIES OF DISCUSSIONS WITH THE EDITORIAL

LONDON

Printed by T. Evans, Printers, Row

MANCHESTER

Critical Observations.

I.

*An Idea of the Reign of Mary Queen of Scots, as a
 Portion of History; Specimens of the Histories of this
 Princess by Dr. Stuart and Dr. Robertson; and a
 comparative View of the Merits of these Royal His-
 torians.*

HISTORICAL composition hath been cultivated of late years with much celebrity and success. The gayest studies now give place to the grave; and the regions of fiction are deserted for the field of truth. Great and important objects are presented to public view: the commonwealth of letters is connected with the state; and History gives her instructions to kings and the people.

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Such researches are always useful and entertaining; but there is an obvious line of distinction that marks the boundaries between laudable curiosity and useful study, and which separates the provinces of the antiquary and the historian. The annals of barbarous tribes; their unsettled and undefined form of government; their unprepared incursions, undecisive battles, and a course of chainless events that hang merely on the sword; may gratify a learned curiosity, but give not that just pleasure and systematic instruction which we derive from the pages of history.

Among the subjects of historical narration, some occupy a more important place than others. When nations pass from one form of government to another, and a different political system is established, the new situation will produce new interests among the neighbouring states, from which will result new maxims of policy, new manners, customs, and laws. After causes have spent their force, and the series of effects derived from them is over, our concern is impaired: how much soever the events that follow are connected with those that precede, the whole connection diminishes to the sight, as the length and distance of the chain removes it from the eye.

But

But, when a system of causes that still operate, and of effects that still subsist, is set before us; when we trace the connection between the present and the past, and mark the openings of a scene in which we ourselves bear a part, a period of greater interest appears, and historical studies come home to mankind. Down to that era we ought to read history as scholars; from that era we ought to study it as citizens.

The reign of Mary Queen of Scots comes under this last description, and forms the most remarkable epoch, as well as the most celebrated portion, of the history of Scotland.

The corruption of the feudal government, a little before the age of this princess, had occasioned a remarkable alteration in the political system of Europe. The power of the Nobles, who had formerly controlled or given law to the Sovereign, was abolished; and on the ruins of petty states, great kingdoms were formed. To the feudal militia standing armies succeeded; wars, which had formerly been waged in short excursions, and which terminated in a single campaign, were now carried on in a regular plan; and

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Policy, mingling with the spirit of Conquest, thought of securing as well as of extending dominion. Spain, France, and England, under the reigns of Charles, of Francis, and of Henry, had already drawn the attention of neighbouring nations; when Scotland, which had hitherto wasted her strength in quarrels between France and England, emerged from her obscurity, and took her station in the system of Europe. From this period the affairs of Scotland are so blended with those of other nations, and the influence of the system then established on succeeding periods is so visible, that the Scottish history becomes equally an object to foreign nations and to future ages; and without the knowledge of the revolutions which happened, and of the characters which figured at that time, we can neither form a just notion of the events that took place in the sixteenth century, nor of the series of transactions that has been unfolded since that era.

If any thing can add to the celebrity and importance of that period in the Scottish annals, it is the heroine of the History, Mary Queen of Scots, the most beautiful and unfortunate princess of Europe, whose person, according

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according to the observation of a French historian, none ever beheld without admiration, and whose story none ever read without tears. The various fortunes of this illustrious princess, the ever-changing scene of her life, and the tragical catastrophe which put a period to her woes, soften the detail of public affairs with the feelings of private life, and add to History all the charms and interest of Romance.

Dr. William Robertson, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, about twenty years ago published a History of Scotland under the reign of Queen Mary. Concerning this performance there is one general observation which has often been made. It is inconsistent with itself; the characters he draws and the actions he relates are in visible contradiction; and of consequence his History is what the lawyers call *felô de se*. According to this writer, the Queen of Scots conceived a violent passion for the Earl of Bothwell during the life of her husband; carried on with him a most indecent and criminal intercourse by letters; consented to a plan of poisoning her husband, that she might obtain possession of her lover:—that, on the vigour of Darnley's constitution surmounting the effects

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of the poison, she flew to his arms, and discovered every mark of affection and fondness; invited him to remove to the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, that she herself might attend him without being absent from her son: that, on his arrival at the Kirk of Field, she loaded him with her caresses, tended his couch by day, and at night slept in the chamber under his apartment; that this solemn farce was merely a prelude to one of the most dreadful tragedies that History records; that, accordingly, after having in concert with Bothwell appointed the ninth of February for the murder of Darnley, she took leave of him two hours before the catastrophe, with every mark of affection and protestation of tenderness; went to the palace of Holyrood-house to celebrate a mask, and devoted to music and dancing, revelry and riot, that very hour which she had marked for the murder of her husband! — that, instead of prosecuting with rigour the person who was publicly charged with the commission of this murder, she studied to mortify, and endeavoured to punish, his accusers; violated and affronted justice and law, by a mock trial and mock acquittal of Bothwell; that, in the space of two months after this horrible transaction, she

was

was carried off, not only without resistance or reluctance, but with full participation and consent, by this very person; with whom she lived in a state of adultery; and whom she advanced to honour; and that, as soon as the forms of law would admit of his divorce-ment from his wife, she, in the face of the kingdom, and before the eyes of all Europe, raised to the bed and the throne of her husband that very criminal by whom he was murdered!——

The proofs, however, of this horrid criminality are only daring and unscrupulous affirmations, with sly and insidious surmises. History feels herself insulted, and starts back in amazement. Language, abused, loses its power, and regrets its misapplication. The truth is assassinated; and a deformed and bloody phantom is made to represent an honourable and accomplished princess.

But the abusive imitator of history passes himself from his fictions. Attend to the character which he draws of Mary,

Vol. L. p. 265, 8vo edition, 1776.

"Mary possessed many of those *qualifications* which raise *affection*, and procure *esteem*."

esteem. To all the charms of her own sex, she added many of the accomplishments of the other."

Vol. II. p. 175.

"To all the charms of beauty, she added those accomplishments which render their impression irresistible. Formed with the qualities which we love; not with the talents that we admire, she was an agreeable woman rather than an illustrious Queen. To say that she was always unfortunate, will not account for that succession of calamities which beset her; we must likewise add, that she was often imprudent. Humanity will draw a veil over the part of her character which it cannot approve, and may, perhaps, prompt some to impute her actions to her situation, more than to her dispositions."

The most perfect characters in History might not be ashamed of the praise which Dr. Robertson here gives to a woman whom he had represented as guilty of a series of the most atrocious and detestable crimes. It would be insulting the patience of the public to make any reflections on such contradictions and absurdities. Nothing but the most shameless audacity could have ventured

on

on such a strange mixture of defamation and panegyric ; nothing but the most infantine credulity can give any credit to such a History. To this work, accordingly, of Dr. Robertson, posterity can never carry any appeal.

The slow but certain judgment of Time having diminished the popularity and fame which Robertson's History of Scotland acquired early, from the borrowed ornaments and false glitter scattered through that work, as well as from its elaborate dissertations and its pompons declamatory style, well-adapted to express the cant of the pulpit, but ill-suited to the gravity and dignity of the Historic Muse ; the literary circles in Scotland have long and impatiently wished for an account of that celebrated period of the Scottish history, written with that liberality which becomes a man of letters, and with that fidelity and justice which a historian owes to the public and to himself. To gratify these wishes, Dr. Gilbert Stuart, well known to the literary world as a lawyer, an antiquary, and a philosopher, now comes forward in the character of an historian. He asserts and vindicates the innocence of Mary Queen of Scots from the imputations of her enemies.

He

He offers the most incontestible evidence of her honour, from a survey of her own transactions, and from an examination of those of her adversaries. There is a consistency, an unity, and an integrity in his work. By uniting the interests of truth and humanity, and reconciling the judgment of the understanding to the feelings of the heart, he renders this portion of history as pleasing and pathetic as it is interesting and important.

With regard to information and matter, as well as composition and language, the two authors are in a wide extremity and difference; and it may be amusing to exhibit pointed specimens of their abilities, and then to draw a parallel of their merits.

Dr.

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Character of Lord Darnley.

* Such was the unhappy fate of Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, in the twenty-first year of his age †. The indulgence of fortune, and his own external accomplishments, without any other merit, had raised him to a height of dignity, of which he was altogether unworthy. By his folly and ingratitude he lost the heart of a woman who doated on him to distraction. His insolence and inconstancy alienated from him such of the nobles as had contributed most zealously to his elevation. His levity and caprice exposed him to the scorn of the people, who once revered him as the descendant of their antient kings and heroes. Had he died a natural death, his end would have been unlamented, and his memory

* Hist. of Scotland, vol. I. p. 400, 401, 370. edit. 1776.

† According to Dr. Robertson, he was murdered by Q. Mary.

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Character of Lord Darnley.

* Thus perished, in the twenty-first year of his age, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, a prince of a high lineage. A fate † so sudden, and so immature excited a sympathy and sorrow which must have been lost in the consciousness of his imperfections, if he had fallen by the ravages of disease, or the stroke of time. The symmetry of his form recommended him to the most beautiful princess of Christendom; and her generosity and love placed him upon the throne of an antient kingdom. But he neither knew how to enjoy his prosperity, nor to ensure it. His vices did not permit him to maintain the place he had won in her affection; and he was not intitled by his ability to hold the reins of government.

* Hist. of Scotland, vol. I. p. 400, 401, 32.

† According to Dr. Stuart, he was murdered by the faction of the Earl of Murray.

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memory have been soon forgotten; but the cruel circumstances of his murder, and the remissness with which it was afterwards avenged, have made his name to be remembered with regret, and have rendered him the object of pity, to which he had otherwise no title;

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ment. He was seen to the greatest advantage in those games and sports which require activity and address. He rode with skill the war horse, and was dexterous in hawking and the chase; but possessing no discernment of men, and no profoundness of policy, he was altogether unequal to direct an agitated monarchy, and to support the glory of his Queen. Instead of acting to her protection and advantage he encouraged her misfortunes and calamities. His imbecillity laid him open to her enemies and his own. The excessive facility of his nature made him the dupe of the shallowest artifice; and while he was weakly credulous, he could not keep in concealment those secrets which most nearly concerned him. Driven into difficult situations by passion and imprudence, he was unable to extricate himself. Under the guidance of no regular principles, he was inconstant and capricious. His natural

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of an animal appetite. But while our graver historians*, are assiduous to reproach him with wantonness in the chamber of Venus; it ought to be remembered, that the murder of Rizzio, and his attempt to dispossess the Queen of her government are far more indelible stains upon his memory, and imply a profligacy and guilt which could only be exceeded by the enormity of that wickedness which schemed and executed his destruction. It is with pain that History relates such cruel events; but while she melts with human woe, it is her province to be rigorously just. Her weeping eye is the indication of an instructive sorrow, and while her bursting heart, mourns over the crimes, the calamities, and the wretchedness of ages that are past, she records them with fidelity as a lesson to succeeding times.

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* Knox, p. 441. Keith, p. 365.

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Character of the Earl of Murray †.

There is no person in that age, about whom historians have been more divided, or whose character has been drawn with such opposite colours. Personal intrepidity, military skill, sagacity and vigour in the administration of civil affairs, are virtues which even his enemies allow him to have possessed in an eminent degree. His moral qualities are more dubious, and ought neither to be praised, nor censured, without great reserve and many distinctions. In a fierce age he was capable of using victory with humanity, and of treating the vanquished with moderation. A patron of learning, which among martial nobles was either unknown or despised. Zealous for religion, to a degree which distinguished him, even at a time

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Character of the Earl of Murray †.

Such was the lamentable fate of James Stuart, earl of Murray. Great talents, a pleasing exterior, and a propitious fortune, had conducted him to distinction and eminence. A selfish and insatiable ambition was his ruling appetite; and he pursued its dictates with an unshaken perseverance. His inclination to aspire beyond the rank of a subject was encouraged by the turbulence of his age; and his connections with Elizabeth overturned in him altogether the virtuous restraints of allegiance and duty. He became an enemy to his sister and his sovereign; and the arts by which he accomplished her overthrow, are the vouchers of his capacity, and his demerits. His obligations to her were excessive; his ingratitude was monstrous; and no language has any terms

† Hist. of Scotland, vol. I. p. 513, 513, 514.

† Hist. of Scotland, vol. II. p. 53, 55, 54, 55.

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a time when professions of that kind were not uncommon. His confidence in his friends was extreme, and infinite only to his liberality to them, which knew no bounds. A disinterested passion for the liberty of his countrymen prompted him to oppose the pernicious system which the prince of Lorraine had obliged the Queen-mother to pursue. On Mary's return to Scotland, he served her with a zeal and assiduity, to which he sacrificed the friendship of those who were most attached to his person. But, on the other hand, his ambition was immoderate, and events happened that opened to him vast projects, which allure his enterprising genius, and led him to actions inconsistent with the duty of a subject. His treatment of the Queen, to whose bounty he was so much indebted, was unbrotherly and ungrateful. The dependance on Elizabeth, under which he brought Scotland, was

disgraceful

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terms of reproach that are sufficiently powerful to characterize his perfidiousness and cruelty to her. Uncommon pretensions to sanctity, and to the love of his country, with the perpetual affectation of acting under the impulse of honourable motives, concealed his purposes, and recommended him to popular favour. His manners were grave, even to sadness. By a composed and severe deportment, and by ostentatious habits of devotion, he awakened and secured the admiration of his contemporaries. His house had a greater resemblance to a church than a palace. A dark solemnity reigned within its walls; and his domestic ties were precise, pragmatical, and morbid. The more zealous of the clergy were proud of resorting to him; and while he invited them to join with him in the exercises of religion, he paid a flattering respect to their expostulations.

Spottiswood, p. 214

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disgraceful to the nation. He deceived and betrayed Norfolk with a baseness unworthy of a man of honour; his elevation to such unexpected dignity inspired him with new passions, with haughtiness and reserve; and instead of his natural manner, which was blunt and open, he affected the arts of dissimulation and reserve. Fond, towards the end of his life, of flattery, and impatient of advice, his creatures, by soothing his vanity, led him astray while his ancient friends stood at a distance and predicted his approaching fall. But, amidst the turbulence and confusion of these factious periods, he dispensed justice with so much impartiality, he repressed the licentious borderers with so much courage, and established such uncommon order and tranquillity in the country, that his administration was extremely popular, and he was long and affectionately remembered among the commons by the name of the good Regent.

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sitions of the Scriptures, which he hypocritically considered as the sacred rule of his life †. By an attention to law and justice, he endeavoured to conciliate the approbation of men, upon whom he could not impose by his affectations of piety. He was sedulous in attending the court of session; and as the most salutary statutes are of little avail where their administration is corrupt, he repressed with vigour the inordinate venality of its senators †. To the interests of science and learning he was favourable in an uncommon degree; and Buchanan, who had tasted his bounty, gives a varnish to his crimes. The glory of having atchieved the Reformation, afforded him a fame

† Buchanan, lib. xix.

† Quoties a bello vacaret, totum diem Judicium collegio affideret. Ea presentis verecundia sebat, ut neque tenuiores per calumniam opprimerentur, neque, in potentiorum gratiam, litibus in longum dilatis, exhaurentur. Buchanan. Hist. lib. xix.

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...of the sciences
which he frequently
considered as the sacred
rule of his life. By an
attention to law and his
duty, he endeavored to
conform to the approbation
of men, whom he
could not please by his
affectionate display. His
was laboring in securing
the good of his country;
and the most liberal
and the most liberal
of his spirit were
their admiration as
their belief in his
virtue and his
relative to his country.
The interests of science
and learning he was
not less devoted to
and his own
desires; and his
who had the
gives a variety to his
crimes. The glory of
having achieved the
forming, showed him
a time.

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a fame that was most
seducing and brilliant. His
other projects were equally
successful; and perhaps
they were more difficult
and arduous. But as they
were little distinguished
by heroic action, and were
far less honourable, they
added no splendor to his
renown; and it has been
supposed that his talents
were more eminent in his
youth, than in his riper
age. His activity, however,
had only changed its ob-
jects; and his capacity
and ambition were, at all
times, equally ardent and
vigorous. His abilities,
notwithstanding, though
extensive and various,
were better calculated for
the struggles of faction,
than the speculations of
polity. He was greater
as a demagogue than as a
minister; and it was more
flattering to him to be the
viceroi of a foreign po-
tentate, than to direct
the councils of his natural
sovereign. His genius
assimilated with bustle;
and

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and though he could be easy and tranquil in the midst of dangers, the ever-flowing stream of circumstances in the details of government, fatigued his attention, and disturbed his repose. With a cold and perfidious heart, he conferred favours without being generous, and received them without being grateful. His enmity was implacable; his friendship dangerous; and his caresses, oftener than his anger, preceded the stroke of his resentment. The standard of his private interest directed all his actions, and was the measure by which he judged of those of other men. To the necessities of his ambition he was ready to sacrifice every duty and every virtue; and in the paroxysms of his selfishness, he feared not the commission of any crime or cruelty, however enormous or detestable. Upon his elevation to the Regency, he gave a free indulgence to his pride. He parted with that show

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ed blood and dignity but
and in support but alas
all, anxious to find
to ever, how
circumstances in the
case of government
his nomination as
in W. 1790, he
a civil and dignified
he conducted himself
out being generous
received from his
being granted. His
may was impossible
his friendship dangerous
his castle, of which
his anger, provoked
stroke of his retirement.
The husband of his
ill health directed all
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Upon his elevation to the
Regency, he gave a free
indulgence to his vices.
He parted with that love

of sincerity and candour
which had contributed to
his rise, and became sullen
and distant *. He neg-
lected and despised his
ancient friends; and, in-
dulging himself in the
enjoyment of stateliness
and adulation, assumed
that contemptuous air
which befits only a despot
who is surrounded with
slaves. The pillars of his
greatness were forsaking
him; and the blow that
laid him in the dust only
prevented his exit in the
field or on the scaffold.
To the great body of the
Scottish nobles, whose
consequence he had hum-
bled, his death was a
matter of stern indiffer-
ence, or of secret joy;
but to the common people,
it was an object of sincere
grief, and they lamented
him long under the ap-
pellation of the godly Re-
gent. Elizabeth bewailed
in him a strenuous partizan;
and a chosen instrument
by which she might subvert
the independency of Scot-
land; and Mary, tender
and

* Melvil, Memoirs, p. 205.

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...and devotion; wept over a brother, a heretic; and an enemy, whom a sudden and violent destiny had overtaken in his guilty career; with his full load of unrepented crimes &c.

Character of John Knox.

Soon after the dissolution of this assembly, Knox, the prime instrument of spreading and establishing the reformed religion in Scotland, ended his life in the 67th year of his age. Zeal, intrepidity, and disinterestedness, were virtues which he possessed in an eminent degree. He was acquainted, too, with the learning cultivated in that age; and excelled in that species of eloquence which is calculated to rouse and inflame.

¹ Hist. of Scotland, vol. II. p. 41, 42.

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¹ Camden, p. 425. ² Crawford, Memoirs, p. 128.

Character of John Knox.

This remarkable innovation was hardly introduced into the church, when it lost John Knox, its strongest support and firmest friend. The zeal which he had displayed in overturning popery, and in resisting the despotic projects of Mary of Lorraine, have distinguished and immortalized his name; and upon the establishment of the Reformation, he continued to

¹ Hist. of Scotland, vol. II. p. 134, 135, 136, 137, 138.

² The introduction of episcopacy into Scotland.

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inflame. His maxims, however, were often too severe, and the impetuosity of his temper excessive. Rigid and uncompromising himself, he shewed no indulgence to the infirmities of others. Regardless of the distinctions of rank and character, he uttered his admonitions with an acrimony and vehemence more apt to irritate, than to reclaim. This often betrayed him into indecent and undutiful expressions with respect to the Queen's person and conduct. Those very qualities, however, which now render his character less amiable, fitted him to be an instrument of Providence for advancing the reformation among a fierce people, and enabled him to face dangers, and to surmount opposition, from which a person of a more gentle spirit would have been apt to shrink back. By an unwearied application to study and to business, as well as by the frequency and fervour of his

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to act with fortitude according to his principles. His piety was ardent, and his activity indefatigable; his integrity was superior to corruption; and his courage could not be shaken by dangers or death. In literature and learning his proficiency was slender and moderate; and to philosophy he was altogether a stranger. His heart was open, his judgment greater than his penetration, his temper severe, his behaviour rustic. The fears and contempt he entertained of popery were extravagant; and while he propagated the reformed doctrines, he fancied he was advancing the purposes of heaven. From his conviction that the ends he had in view were the noblest which can actuate a human creature, he was induced to imagine that he had a title to prosecute them by all the methods within his power. His motives of conduct were disinterested and upright; but the strain of his action

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his public discourses, he had worn out a constitution naturally strong. During a lingering illness, he discovered the utmost fortitude; and met the approaches of death with a magnanimity inseparable from his character. He was constantly employed in acts of devotion, and comforted himself with those prospects of immortality, which not only preserve good men from desponding, but fill them with exultation in their last moments. The earl of Morton, who was present at his funeral, pronounced his eulogium in a few words, the more honourable for Knox, as they came from one whom he had often censured with peculiar asperity. "There lies he, who never feared the face of man."

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and life deserve not commendation. He was ever earnest to promote the glory of God; but he perceived not that this sublime maxim, in its unlimited exercise, consists not with the weakness and imperfections of man. It was pleaded by the murderers of cardinal Beaton; and he scrupled not to consider it as a sufficient vindication of them. It was appealed to by Charles IX. as his apology for the massacre of Paris; and it was urged by Ravaillac as his justifying motive for the assassination of Henry IV. The most enormous crimes have been promoted by it; and it stimulated this Reformer to cruel devastations and outrages. Charity, moderation, the love of peace, patience, and humanity, were not in the number of his virtues. Papists as well as popery were the objects of his detestation; and though he had risen to mineence by exclaiming against the persecutions of priests,

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Dr. ROBERTSON.

Dr. Robertson was a man of great talents and industry, and a warm friend to the cause of the oppressed. He was a man of great energy and courage, and he was not afraid to speak his mind. He was a man of great integrity and honesty, and he was not afraid to stand up for the truth. He was a man of great kindness and compassion, and he was always ready to help the poor and the needy. He was a man of great faith and devotion, and he was always ready to sacrifice for his religion. He was a man of great wisdom and understanding, and he was always ready to listen to the opinions of others. He was a man of great strength and courage, and he was always ready to fight for his principles. He was a man of great love and affection, and he was always ready to help his friends and his country. He was a man of great honor and respect, and he was always ready to stand up for his dignity. He was a man of great glory and fame, and he was always ready to accept his share of the world's goods. He was a man of great power and influence, and he was always ready to use his power for the benefit of his people. He was a man of great wealth and riches, and he was always ready to share his wealth with the poor. He was a man of great beauty and grace, and he was always ready to show his beauty to the world. He was a man of great strength and courage, and he was always ready to fight for his principles. He was a man of great love and affection, and he was always ready to help his friends and his country. He was a man of great honor and respect, and he was always ready to stand up for his dignity. He was a man of great glory and fame, and he was always ready to accept his share of the world's goods. He was a man of great power and influence, and he was always ready to use his power for the benefit of his people. He was a man of great wealth and riches, and he was always ready to share his wealth with the poor. He was a man of great beauty and grace, and he was always ready to show his beauty to the world.

Dr. STUART.

priests, he was himself a persecutor. His suspicions that the Queen was determined to re-establish the popish religion, were rooted and uniform; and upon the most frivolous pretences he was strenuous to break that chain of cordiality which ought to bind together the prince and the people. He inveighed against her government, and insulted her person with virulence and indecency. It flattered his pride to violate the duties of a subject, and to scatter sedition. He affected to direct the politicians of his age; and the ascendant he maintained over the people, drew to him their respect and obedience. He delivered his sentiments to them with the most unbounded freedom; and he sought not to restrain, or to disguise his impetuosity, or his peevishness. His advices were pressed with heat; his admonitions were pronounced with anger; and whether his theme was a topic of policy,

Dr. ROBERTSON,

[illegible]

DR. STUART.

lity, or of faith, his knowledge appeared to be equally infallible. He wished to be considered as an organ of the divine will. Contradiction inflamed him with hostility; and his resentments took a deep, and a lasting foundation. He considered the temporal interests of society as inferior to the ecclesiastical; and unacquainted alike with the objects of government, and the nature of man, he regarded the struggles of ambition as impious and profane; and knew not that the individual is carried to happiness and virtue on the tide of his passions, and that admiration and eminence are chiefly to be purchased by the vigour, the fortitude, and the capacity which are exerted and displayed in public occupations. He inculcated retired and ascetic virtues. He preached the unlimited contempt of this world; he was a mortal enemy to gaiety and mirth; and it was his opinion that human life ought

Dr. ROBERTSON.

[illegible]

Dr. STUART.

In discharging the functions of his ministry, his ardour was proportioned to his sincerity. Assiduous and fervent toils, watchful and anxious cares wasted his strength, and hastened his dissolution. He saw it approach without terror; spoke with exultation of the services which he had rendered to the Gospel and the church; and was almost constantly in prayer with the brethren.

His

"made my tongue a trumpet
"to forewarn realms and na-
"tions, yea, certain great re-
"velations of mutations and
"changes, when no such
"things were feared, nor yet
"was appearing; a portion
"whereof cannot the world
"deny, (be it never so blinde)
"to be fulfilled; and the rest
"(alas) I fear shall follow
"with greater haste, and in
"more full perfection than my
"sorrowful heart desireth;
"notwithstanding these reve-
"lations and assurances, I did
"ever abstain to commit any
"thing to writing, contented
"only to have obeyed the
"charge of him who com-
"manded me to crie." Hist.
of the Reform. and other
treatises, p. 88, 89.

33. OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING

Dr. ROBERTSON.

His confidence of a happy
immortality was secure
and firm, and disdained
the slightest mixture of
suspicion or doubt. He
surrendered his spirit with
cheerfulness, and without
a struggle. It belongs to
history to describe with
candour his virtues as
well as his imperfections;
and it may be observed
in alleviation of the latter,
that the times in which
he lived were rude and
fierce; and that his pas-
sion for converts, and his
proneness to persecution,
while they rose more im-
mediately out of the in-
tenseness of his belief, and
the natural violence of his
temperament, were keenly
and warmly fostered by
his professional habits.
The members of every
spiritual polity are necessa-
rily employed in extend-
ing its glory, and in ad-
vancing its interests; and
in that age the conflicts
between the popish and
the protestant doctrines
had been driven to their
wildest fury. To protect
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Dr. STUART.

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Dr. ROBERTSON.

and to every form of ecclesiastical government; yet the articles of faith held out by each being different and hostile the guides of every church are in a continual warfare. They contend negatively for the rights attributed to them; and where they are not controlled by the ties of their establishment into an indolent indifference, that brings religion into contempt, they are the means like our Reformer to increase their conquests, to divide the undivided empire of earth into kingdoms, and to kindle into warmer and agitated flames the cold and the most incurable passions of mankind. They give a check to religion in its happy progress to universal benevolence; they are guards to prevent the truth from taking its full and wide range; they advance they produce confusion and ruin; and perhaps it would be necessary for human life if the existence of

Dr. STUART.

pence, the formalities, and the abuses of religious establishments were for ever at an end; if society were deprived alike of the sovereign pontiff with his tiara, the stalled bishop, and the mortified presbyter; if no confessions and creeds were held out as standards of purity and doctrine; if faith and futurity were left unfettered like philosophy and science; if nations were not harnessed in opinions like horses to a carriage; and if every man's heart were the only temple where he was to worship his God.

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These are very clear, exact, and decisive vouchers from which to judge of the respective abilities of the Rival Historians. No reader need be at any loss to decide; and to anticipate his judgment, would be to insult his understanding.

We now proceed to draw a parallel between Dr. Stuart and Dr. Robertson, on the heads of Originality, Narration, the Drawing of Characters, and Composition or Style.

1. Originality.

The first praise of an author is original genius. Invention, imagination, enthusiasm, in poetry; ingenious discovery, profound thought, scientific arrangement, in prose; mark and illuminate this high and transcendent character. A mediocrity of talents; a timid and cautious deference to the prejudices of the age; and the ordinary capacity of decking out common topics and received opinions with the tricks of rhetoric and the trappings of language; may gain an easy reception into the world, and obtain the praises of the many without exciting the envy of the few. But it requires a bold and inventive mind,

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that, scorning the trammels of authority, strikes out a path of its own; a lycean eye, that surveys every corner of nature and of art, with "orient rays unborrowed of the sun;" and the treasures of original thought joined to the stores of acquired learning; to confer the higher honours of literature, and to give a title to the applause of ages to come. To these Dr. Robertson has no claim whatever. Nothing new or original, bold or inventive, is to be found in his works. He has collected with industry the observations of others; has availed himself of the discoveries of his contemporaries; has seized and adorned the rising ideas of the age; but he has never in one instance extended the sphere of historical or philosophical discovery, or added the smallest accession to the common stock of learning. We here throw down the gauntlet, and bid defiance to his most credulous and most admiring flatterers, to produce a theory, a dissertation, or even a single thought, which we cannot trace to the source, and refer to the original owner. To invent and to embellish; to create and to clothe; are very different operations. The ranks of the master and of the scholar are never to be confounded. To interpret Newton's philosophy,

phy, to explain Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws, or to extend an observation of Hume to the length of a dissertation; will not entitle to the praise of Newton, of Montesquieu, or of Hume.

Dr. Stuart is known to the world, not only as a man of letters, but as a philosopher; and this last character he has carried into the province of history. Leaving it to the subalterns in literature to copy the errors or to embellish the opinions of others, he claims the merit of discovery and original thought. Transcending vulgar prejudices, he hath dissipated errors that were hallowed by time; and resisting the authority of great names, he hath asserted the rights of genius, and thought for himself. His *View of Society in Europe*, in its progress from rudeness to refinement, will, in particular, ever remain a monument of his ingenuity and erudition. He hath thrown light upon the darkness of the middle times, and brought out a beautiful fabric from the scattered and disjointed ruins of antiquity. In his *History of Scotland* the same original spirit is to be perceived; and it is a consequence of it, that he has been enabled to give a new face to a portion of story which has

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been treated over and over again in the different languages of Europe.

Let us now compare the Rival Historians with regard to Historical Narration, Drawing Characters, and Style.

2^d Historical Narration.

Historical Narration ought to be clear, full, regular, and uninterrupted. In all these qualities, except the third, Dr. Robertson is eminently deficient. He is too attentive to ornament, to study perspicuity; nor does he employ what his Rival so properly calls "a narrative that aims at simplicity, and that is ambitious to record the truth." His work has the air of an Apology, not of a History. He pleads his cause like a lawyer; he attempts to wield the weapons of an orator; and seldom or never assumes the gravity and dignity of a judge. To prevent the reader from perceiving the contradictions in his narration, he sometimes covers himself with darkness, sometimes with the glaring colours of false eloquence. Let an unbiassed reader peruse his account of Gowrie's conspiracy. He boasts of having placed "that transaction in a light that dispells much of the darkness in which

"it

It had been indeed, to while all that he performs is to render the darkness more visible.

Nor is his narrative full or complete. He selects those portions of the Scottish History which he can adorn, but does not place the whole before the eye. He hastens over every part of his subject, except where Mary is concerned, and by this means gives his work the appearance of a historical novel. He never penetrates the veil of courts, nor removes the trappings of state. He relates public transactions without giving a picture of the times in which they happened; nor can we discover, from his History, that the manners of the Scottish nation, in the 16th century, were different from those of the present. We allow him the just praise of that regularity, or rather uniformity, which proceeds from the want of genius. The dead sea never ebbs nor flows; nor has the artificial canal the sweep of a torrent. But the order of coldness or uniformity is not the order of dignity; and Dr. Robertson hath given us a happy exemplification of the mighty difference, that there is, between

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the proud pace of Pegasus, and the said
step of the staggon-horses of a stumbling

To finish the list of his defects on this
head, he is perpetually interrupting the
course of history, and fatiguing the patience
of his reader with unnecessary digressions
and dissertations; a practice unknown to the
ancients, and to those moderns who have imi-
tated them most happily. We find no ab-
lutions in Thucydides, in Livy, or in Tacitus.
The last mentioned philosophical historian
sometimes gives us a picture of human na-
ture with one stroke of the pencil, and
comprehends a system in a single sentence;
but, to make formal declamations on bor-
rowed thoughts, to preach on the common
topics of politics and morals, becomes the
pen of a novice, not the hand of a master.
In the valuable additions which Mr. Hume
has made to the last edition of his History,
-there is an observation to which it may be
proper to call the attention of Dr. Robert-
son and his friends. *Let never ebb nor flow of a torrent. But the* Dr.
order of councils or uniformity is not the
order of nature. *At the end of Volume VI. there is*
the following note: "This note was in the
first editions a part of the text; but the Author
omitted it, in order to avoid, as much as possible, the style
of dissertation in the body of his History." P. 564.

Dr. Stuart excels in all those qualities of style in which Dr. Robertson is so deficient. He places his subject before the eyes of the reader in its full dimensions, and in the fairest light. His narrative is united in all its parts; we carry the connection in our minds; and readily adopt the conclusion which he draws. He unites perspicuity with conciseness; strength with elegance; dignity with spirit. He never interrupts the course of his narration to call the attention of the reader upon himself. Having placed the finished picture before the eye, he retires; and leaves it to the unbiassed taste of his flowery and unequal Rival to surround his work with false brilliancy that allure but attract from his subject.

3. Drawing Characters.

To draw the characters of those illustrious personages who have figured in public life, is one of the most arduous, but most splendid labours of the Historian. Dr. Robertson's attempts of this kind in his Scottish History have long been condemned by the judgement of criticism; and, by altering his manner in future efforts of a similar nature, he himself hath subscribed to the sentence. He sports with characters;

instead of drawing them; to show us what they are, he tells us what they are not; rings an alternate chime of praise and censure; and balances virtues and defects in a play of antitheses that degrades History. His portraits are without either life or resemblance. His character of Murray is inconsistent with itself; and his character of John Knox gives us no idea of that rustic apostle, and will apply to any reformer of any age.

Dr. Stuart has seized the true historic pencil, and employs it with a masterly hand. He copies from nature and life. He draws not figures that exist in the fancy, but the portraits of men who have figured on the great theatre of the world. All his efforts of this kind, particularly his Characters of Lord Darnley, Murray, John Knox, Buchanan, Bothwell, Bishop Leslie, and Queen Mary, must strike every reader as artful delineations of human nature, and master-pieces of composition.

4. Composition, or Style.

The last article on which we shall compare the Rival Historians is Composition, or Style. The Style of Dr. Robertson met, at first, with the encomiums of the many, who believed

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without examination, and admit without reason. After being submitted to the fiery trial of criticism, it is discovered to be mechanical, unchaste, and puer.

The intention of language is to unfold thought, and style ought to vary according to the subject. The antients, whom we must still confess to be our masters in almost every thing, had styles adapted and appropriated to every object of literature. Dr. Robertson never varies his manner of writing. Whether he draws the character of a Scottish Queen, or an Italian Fidler; whether he describes the fall of a Kingdom, or the rise of the Covenant, it is in the same sonorous periods, and with the same pomp and parade of inflated diction. A giant may move with ease as well as dignity: but he that walks on stilts, must strut with a stiff, as well as an uniform pace.

His style is unchaste as well as mechanical. He is a total stranger to that simplicity which is the basis of ornament; and knows not the soft ground that sets off flowers to advantage. He attempts to *dazzle*, not to *fill* the eye; and would rather please the ear by a harmonious period, than convey instruction to the mind. He never forgets

gets that he is making sentences; nor loses sight of himself, even when he celebrates the beauty of Mary. He always attempts to shine, and gilds objects that he ought only to describe. His Style is not elegant, but gaudy; not beautiful, but beautified. The following verses of Pope characterize forcibly his manner of writing.

False eloquence, like the artifice glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on every place;
The face of Nature we no more survey,
All glares alike without distinction gay;
Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent as more suitable;
A vile conceit in pompous words express'd
Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd.
For different styles, with different subjects suit,
As several garbs with country, town, and court.

To conclude, the Style of Dr. Robertson is poor. Without that glowing and fertile imagination, which, by new resemblances of ideas and combinations of language, supplies a fund of ever-changing, but ever beautiful modes of expression, he racks the beaten tracks of imagery, and runs the round of tropes and metaphors, that have been handed down from author to author since the beginning of the world. "The current and the torrent; the storm and the calm;

calm ; clouds and darkness, and rays and beams of light ;" all such metaphors as have been sanctified by time, and by the uninterrupted usage of two thousand years, we meet with almost in every page ; but the lettered eye never marks a single image that comes from a creative mind, that is original or new. Pope's metaphor of the prismatic glass will again aid us in describing this author.—He spreads gaudy colours all around him, but colours only that are borrowed.

The Style of Dr. Stuart is chaste, animated, simple, and grand. It varies with the subject ; and joins elegance to propriety. He despises the rhetorical tricks that captivate vulgar ears ; he scorns the meretricious beauties that allure vulgar eyes ; and, in a strain of affecting, but masculine eloquence, he enlightens the understanding, and touches the heart.

Dr. Robertson writes to the many ; Dr. Stuart to the few. The former scatters profusely the figures and flowers of false rhetoric ; the latter employs the noble strains of true and unadulterated oratory. The one is a painted artificial image that may allure for a time ; the other is a natural beauty that will charm for ever.

clouds and darkness, and rays and beams of light. All such metaphors have been justified by time, and by the constant usage of two thousand years, well meet with almost in every page; but the lettered eye never makes a single image that comes from a creative mind, than an original one. Pope's metaphor of the poetic glass will again set us in describing this author.—His phrases are as if they were borrowed, but colours only that are borrowed.

The style of Dr. Stuart is chaste, simple, ample, and grand. It varies with the subject; and joins elegance to propriety. He delights in the rhetorical tricks that captivate vulgar ears; he turns the attention to beauties that allure vulgar eyes; and, in a strain of affecting, but mistaken eloquence, he enlivens the understanding and touches the heart. Dr. Robertson writes to the many; Dr. Stuart to the few. The former lectures profusely the figures and flowers of false rhetoric; the latter employs the noble strains of sense and undisturbed gravity. The one is a painted artificial image that may allure some time; the other is a natural beauty that will charm for ever.

HUME, STUART, AND ROBERTSON.

II.

A LITERARY PICTURE of Dr. ROBERTSON, in a contrasted Opposition with the celebrated Mr. HUME.

Qui dedit hoc hodie, cras, si volet, auferet: ut, si Detulerit fasces indignos, detrahet idem.

Pone, meum est, inquit. Pono, tristisque recedo.

HORAT.

THERE is a good fortune in letters as well as in life; and authors as well as men often rise to an eminence which does not belong to them. When the whole christian world, forgetting its charity, looked out for a rival to Hume, they found one in the very bosom of the church. Dr. Robertson gave his History of Scotland to the public. This incident was capricious; and he was indebted to it for the highest popularity. He addressed himself to the multitude at the most favourable moment; and his abilities were courtly and engaging. The flattery of panegyric was exhausted; and abused. It was said, that Mr. Hume had found not only a rival, but a superior. The philosophic Histo-

CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING

Historian was forgot, for a time, in the respect that was paid to an orthodox and flowery Narrator. The palm of history was snatched in haste from his hand. Sagacity, research, and argument, submitted to garbure and dress; and ingenuity and genius gave way to gaudy paintings and puerilities for children.

But the reputation which is sudden, is often temporary and perishable; while that which advances by degrees and under opposition, is almost always lasting and durable. When the 'Spirit of Laws' was first published in France, it attracted no notice. It was necessary that men of sense should meditate its merits, and pronounce their decision. In twenty years the genius of Montesquieu began to be understood, to be admired, and to be immortal. The author who is showy and shallow has a very different fate. He catches in the very hour of publication. His celebrity is at once at its height; and he smiles over the flattering panegyrics of his easy and well-dressed labours, but his praise dies away in the mouths of the vulgar. While the sturdy oak rises slowly to its greatness and its honour, the transitory flower glimmers in the sun, droops, and

HUME, STUART, AND ROBERTSON 17

and perishes. The dying Hume forbids his bustling success. The living Robertson hawls his decaying reputation; universal
 21w beDenned ion u, lunneg dyndod, yallub
 3. In the tracks of the one you perceive the most exactness, weightiness of matter, the utmost depth of penetration, and the profoundest meditation. In those of the other, you are amused with prettiness and romance; you desecrate nerves, blood, and spirit. You give a willing admiration to Hume; you are disposed to be pleased with Robertson. The one forces you to collect all your power and all your attention. The other tickles your fancy, and charms you to idleness. The strength of the former is commanding; the softness of the latter allures. Hume is grave, severe, and sublime; Robertson is smiling, popular, and plausible. The one is a philosopher, and a historian; the other a sophist and a rhetorician.

Robertson is rich in promises and magnificent in apparatus; but his writings disappoint all the fair hopes that are brought to their perusal. The powers of his understanding nowhere instruct us. His shallow and indolent intellect, unenlightened by philo-

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philosophy, and undisturbed with science, cannot preserve itself from error, even when surveying the surface of objects. His industry, though painful, is not connected with knowledge; his elegance, though considerable, is disgraced by affectation; and his arrangements, though laboured, are deficient in art, correctness, and consistency. His matter is hectic with weakness, and sickly with languor; and the purple and the ermine in which it is arrayed, cannot conceal its infirmity and nothingness.

In the absence of the talent of invention, and of any active power of reflection, Robertson discovers the unequivocal characteristics of the common composer. He has no words that breathe, no thoughts that burn. He can get no assistance at home. He goes abroad to ransack every corner for the materials of his mimetic fabricks. Crouching in the trammels of authority, and seeming to condemn them, he adopts without a blush other men's sentiments and observations, often ignorant of their utility and value; but always strenuous to give them the embellishment of dress, and the unmeaningness of declamation. Not insensible himself to his want of originality, he
even

even, injudiciously, exposes the defect by industriously attempting to conceal it. He affects to place facts in new lights; he affects to draw characters with new colours. But go to his historic predecessors, consult the vouchers to which he is too prudent to appeal; and you are somewhat scandalized to meet with his new lights, and his new colours. The trick, indeed, imposes upon the supineness of ignorance, and makes it stare, and gape, and wonder. But, it is more than lost with the learned. They anticipate the artifice, and despise it. No blossoms of a new spring, no fruits of a new autumn, gladden their sight, or solace their palate.

To weigh with skill the degrees of probability and evidence, to dive into the views and the artifices of parties, to perceive the strength and the foibles of actors, to catch the truth while it floats in uncertainty, to keep an even and a steady course, undiverted and undeceived by the prejudices, the passions, and the caprices of preceding historians and his own, are achievements far beyond his utmost reach. He is fond of system; but he cannot attain it. He is fond of philosophy; but he faints in the pursuit of its shadow. Causation and effect are his Scylla

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and

and Charybdis. When he reasons, all his cunning forsakes him: he posits and wanders from contradiction to absurdity. In his solicitude to offend no party, the eye of discernment discovers the habits of selfishness, or the meanness of adulation. In the uniform propagation of high principles of monarchy, the most simple recognize the adorer of prerogative and the worshipper of a pension. In the habitual search after a fineness of motive to which to impute the conduct of statesmen, there are perceivable an affected knowledge of the world, and the decisive proofs of a monkish ignorance of its concerns.

But the more candid friends of this historian are ready enough to give up his matter. They allow that he has no pretensions of any kind to genius, and that his judgment is not that of a great master. It is his composition that they extol; and his taste is, doubtless, the happiest feature of his mind. Yet even here criticism, without being anxious or severe, may exert with success the province of correction. His tone is elevated, but it is uniform. One key is struck, and the ear is fatigued with eternal reverberations of the same sound. The note is musical
and

and soft; but being incessantly repeated, it is the more disgusting upon account of its sweetness. Its merit acts against itself. A sameness of phraseology corresponds with this identity of cadence, and augments its sleepy insipidity. The former defect is to be traced to an untutored ear; the latter is the evident effect of a limited skill in the grammatical art, and of the want of erudition. For varied and artificial constructions, which constitute the harmony of composition, require a knowledge in the philosophy of grammar; and the endless multiplicity of vocables, which diversify the writings of the most finished composers, are the result of an extensive acquaintance with the dead and the living tongues. Now these advantages were never imputed to this author, even by the partiality of friendship, or the impudence of flattery. While the ability, however, of cultivated scholars turns away with disgust from the unvaried and monotonous structure of his periods and diction, this deficiency affects not the multitude. The great mass of the people are infinitely delighted both with his manner and his expression. His elegance is even the more alluring to them, for being imperfect and effeminate. They are melted with his languor, and in raptures with

with his tinsel. Circumlocution, epithet, antithesis, and ostentation, engage completely their affections; and women and children still pursue the glittering butterfly. The jewels are very pretty, indeed, and have a dazzling lustre; but they are deceitful, and false. Like the tresses and the paint of the courtesan, they draw the youthful and unwary; and like them, too, they cover a body rotten at the core, tottering with fragility, and putrid with disease.

These remarks are not made without thought, or at random; and it is not in their direct meaning only that they have their use. Convert them all into their opposites, turn to the other side of the medal, collect their antipodes; and you have a just and correct picture of the accomplished and unrivalled Hume. Robertson is a puny stream losing itself in its mud; Hume is the voice of history speaking to ages, and living in the eternity of time. Imposture and learning, genius and the want of it, cannot long be confounded. The operations of caprice and party are passing, and transient. Truth and justice ever vindicate their rights. The approbation of the select few is immortality. The applau-

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ses of the giddy many are flattering and ominous. The fame of Hume is ever to grow in its brightness. That of Robertson, like the flame expiring in the socket, hastens to its dissolution. His admirers among the clergy of Scotland, have waited long for his apotheosis, like the Jews for their Messiah. A more melancholy task now employs their humanity. They try to sooth the peevishness of their desponding idol; hold up to it the milk of adulation, and, vainly credulous, think to fit to its itching brows the reluctant and uncomplying laurel.

T H E E N D.

HUMANITARIANISM

As of the night when we passed the
threshold, the flame of Liberty is ever to
burn in the heart of the people. That of Liberty
like a flame existing in the heart, passes
to an action. The flame among the
clouds of the night have waited long for the
spark. It is the Jews for their Messiah.
A more humane world now employs their
humanity. It is to learn the possible
and to find the way to hold on to it
in the face of the world and its
tendency to go to the bottom of the ocean
and to the bottom of the sea.

THE END

Handwritten text on the left margin, partially obscured by a dark binding. The text is written in a cursive script and appears to be a list or index of names, possibly related to the main text on the right.

A single handwritten mark, possibly a checkmark or a stylized letter, located in the upper right quadrant of the page.